

December 11, 2019

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Council Members  
**From:** Karina Bull, Analyst  
**Subject:** CB 119725 – Chief Technology Officer Compensation Ordinance

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On December 11, 2019, the Finance and Neighborhoods Committee will discuss and may vote on [CB 119725](#), legislation proposed by the Seattle Department of Human Resources (SDHR). This memo provides a brief overview of the bill and background information.

**Overview**

This legislation would create a discretionary pay program, known as the “Chief Technology Officer” (CTO) compensation program, for the Director of the Seattle Information Technology Department (ITD). Effective Dec 25, 2019, the compensation program would replace the Seattle ITD Director’s current designation as “Executive 4” within the Accountability Pay for Executives Program.

The salary rate per hour for the CTO would be \$82.03 to \$135.34 (i.e., \$171,216 to \$282,506 annual salary). In comparison to the maximum salary rate for the Executive 4 position, the proposed rate for the CTO represents a 15 percent increase for 2019 and an 11 percent increase for 2020. See Table 1 for a comparison of the compensation programs

*Table 1: Compensation Program Comparison*

Compensation Program	2019	2020
Executive 4	\$71.07 - \$117.27 per hour	\$73.63 - \$121.49 per hour
Chief Technology Officer	\$82.03 - \$135.34 per hour	

SDHR indicates that new compensation program was informed by a nationwide compensation study of CTO/Director of Information Technology positions conducted by the City’s Compensation and Classification staff. This study concluded that salary data supported compensating similar positions within a \$200,000 to \$300,000 range for high-density, technology hub locations and recommended a compensation program for the Seattle ITD CTO of \$171,216 to \$282,506.

The data reviewed by SDHR included the following resources:

- Salary data from 15 comparable public agencies in areas identified as “technology hubs”
- Two salary surveys from third party salary providers
- Internal-comparison analysis of single incumbent and paygrade positions in the City (as internal alignment benchmarks)

The salary data from 15 comparable public agencies showed that the average maximum salary for similar positions is \$228,425. The proposed maximum salary for the Seattle ITD CTO would align with the highest paid, public comparator at the City of Santa Clara in California; and would be \$30,000 higher than a comparator position at the City/County of San Francisco and \$80,000 higher than a comparator position at King County. See Table 2 for comparator data.

*Table 2: Pay for Similar Positions at Comparable Public Agencies*

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Range Minimum</b>	<b>Range Maximum</b>
City of Santa Clara (CA)	\$217,512	\$281,496
Metropolitan Transportation Authority (NY)	\$173,380	\$260,070
City/County of San Francisco (CA)	\$196,040	\$250,172
City/County of Denver (CO)	\$154,950	\$247,920
County of Alameda (CA)	\$180,627	\$242,133
City of Houston (TX)	\$106,054	\$235,924
County of Contra Costa (CA)	\$173,597	\$232,637
City of San Diego (CA)	\$61,320	\$232,296
City of Atlanta (GA)	\$132,600	\$221,000
City of Tacoma (WA)	\$171,142	\$219,378
District of Columbia (DC)	\$140,300	\$211,773
King County	\$159,968	\$202,769
County of Solana (CA)	\$164,192	\$200,783
City of Austin (TX)	n/a	\$196,685
San Joaquin County (CA)	\$157,414	\$191,339

Salary survey data from two, third party salary providers (i.e., Salary.com, Milliman) showed maximum salary ranges up to \$283,700 and \$233,037.

Internal comparisons for City of Seattle showed maximum salaries for individual compensation programs in three departments (i.e., Seattle City Light, Seattle Public Utilities, and Seattle Police Department) as ranging from \$275,010 to \$399,372.

**Financial Impacts**

The Mayor would have discretion to pay the incumbent in this position a base salary within the established compensation program. Any additional salary costs would be paid by the Seattle ITD from their 2020 Adopted Budget.

Please contact me if you have any questions about this proposed legislation.

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Executive Director  
Dan Eder, Deputy Director